

Celebrating Kwanzaa

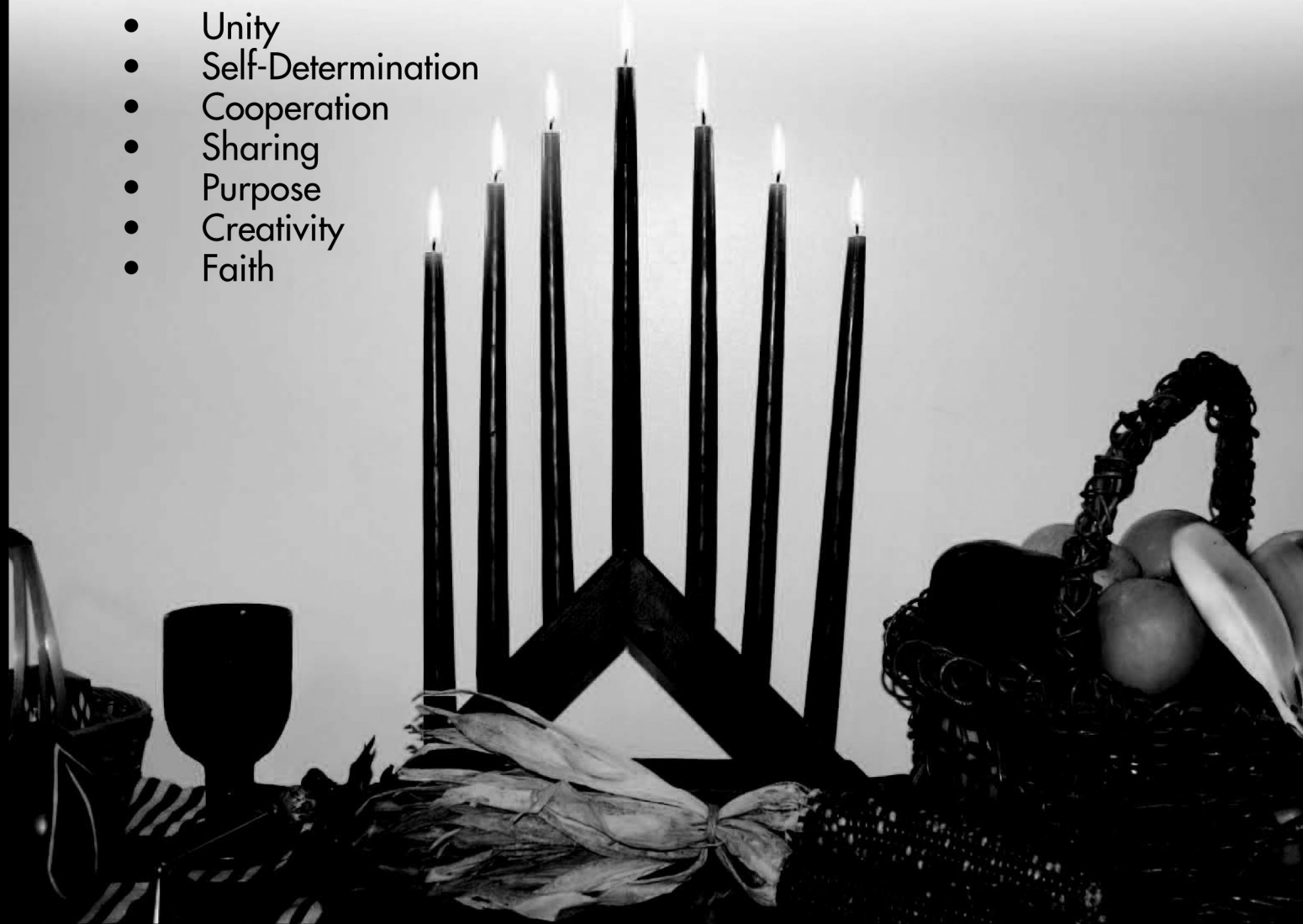
The Story of Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is a newer holiday. Dr. Maulana Karenga created it in 1966. He was living in California at that time. It is a festival honoring African American heritage. The name Kwanzaa means "first fruits." It is a Swahili word. Swahili is an East African language.

The Celebration of Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa lasts for seven days. It is celebrated from December 26 to January 1. During this time people light candles, eat special foods, and give gifts. Also, each day is dedicated to one of the seven main beliefs of Kwanzaa. The seven beliefs are:

- Unity
- Self-Determination
- Cooperation
- Sharing
- Purpose
- Creativity
- Faith



A Kwanzaa Tradition

On each day of Kwanzaa a candle is lit. The seven candles are held in a *kinara*, or candle holder. There are three red candles on the left, three green candles on the right, and one black candle in the center. Red, green, and black are the colors of the holiday.



The black candle is lit first. On the second day the outermost red candle is lit along with the black candle. On the third day the black and red candles are lit along with the outermost green candle. Then the order goes back to red. This is repeated until all seven candles are lit.

To make a *kinara* you will need these materials:

- red, green, and black construction paper
- glue
- poster paper
- yellow tissue paper

Using construction paper cut out one rectangular-shaped black candle and make it the longest. Cut three red candles and three green candles. The red and green candles should get shorter as they get farther from the center candle.

Using black construction paper cut out a seven-branch candlestick. Use the picture for a model. Glue the candlestick to the poster paper. Then glue the seven candles, in the proper order, on the candlestick. Lastly, glue small pieces of the yellow tissue paper to be the flames on top of the candles.